

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

**URIEL da ACOSTA – AFTER
THREE HUNDRED YEARS**

BLACKOUT IN POLAND

**THE PASSING OF CYRUS
ADLER**

**BROOKLYN JEWISH
COMMUNITY COUNCIL
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THE NEWS OF THE MONTH

APRIL

1940

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BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

Vol. XXI

APRIL, 1940 — NISAN, 5700

No. 32

"A PRINCE IN ISRAEL HAS FALLEN"

IN the death of Cyrus Adler not only American but Jewry throughout the world has suffered an irreparable loss. Truly we may say in the words of King David: "Know ye not that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?"—a prince in learning and character, and a man great in service and achievement.

He was a unique figure in Jewish life, in that he combined in himself many gifts and capacities. Scholar, statesman, organizer, teacher, editor, writer, leader—these are but some of the many phases of his genius. Though not the technical Rabbinic scholar like Solomon Schechter, he was nevertheless able to succeed him as the President of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and, by the sheer force of his remarkable personality, to lead it with distinction and honor. He had not the legal background and training of a Louis Marshall, and yet he was able to succeed him as the President of the American Jewish Committee, and to guide that organization in the most critical years of Jewish history with telling success.

More than what he himself directly produced in the field of Jewish scholarship was the unbounded help, support and encouragement that he gave to Jewish scholarship throughout the world.

It may be said without exaggeration that there are hundreds of scholars, whose work would never have seen the light of day if it had not been for the help they received from Dr. Adler. He was the patron *par excellence* of Jewish scholarship. In the case of Dr. Adler the words of Proverbs may truthfully be applied: "It is a tree of life to those who lay hold upon it, and they who support it are happy." The Torah was indeed a tree of life to him, for he made it part of his own life. He enriched his mind with its limitless treasures. But he

achieved also the happiness that comes to those who support the Torah and those encouraged in its pursuit.

Dr. Adler was not what is commonly termed "a good mixer." And for that reason he was often misjudged and misunderstood. Some thought that he held himself aloof, whereas, in reality he just did not like crowds. When you met him in his study, he was the very acme of kindness and sympathetic understanding. He was, however, the intellectual aristocrat, respecting above all solid learning, thorough scholarship, reasoned judgment and sincerity of purpose.

He was the living embodiment of what the sainted Schechter termed "Catholic Israel." He won the esteem of all Jews, of every shade of belief and opinion. Though the official head of what is popularly known as Conservative Judaism, he was, nevertheless highly regarded by the Reform group in American Jewry, as is attested by the fact that he was awarded an Honorary Degree by the Hebrew Union College, the official Rabbinic College of Reform Judaism in this land. And he enjoyed the same regard and veneration from all in the extreme Orthodox group because of his own saintly reverence of and adherence to the old traditional Jewish life. When President Roosevelt selected Dr. Adler as one of his religious advisors in his work for peace, the appointment was unanimously applauded.

Commenting on the words of Kohelet, "And the sun shines and the sun sets," the ancient sages tell us this refers to Jewish life. No sooner does the brilliance of a great man and teacher set, than another luminary arises to shine in Jewish life. "On the very day that Rabbi Akiba died, Rabbi Judah, the Prince was born." That was the glory and the strength of Jewish life. When a Meyer Sulzberger

died we were consoled that a Louis Marshall was here to take his place. When a Marshall died, we were comforted that a Cyrus Adler was to carry on his work. Now that the sun has set again, let us hope and pray that *vezarach ha-shemesh*, that the sun will shine again in Jewish life, and that God may bless us with leaders of *Torah* and *ma-a-sim tovim*—leaders who may guide us, direct us, and inspire us in the field of scholarship and service, in keeping with the beautiful and lofty example set by this Prince and great man in Israel—Cyrus Adler.

—I. H. L.

The Pharaoh Who Knew Not God

ONCE again, as the year rolls by, we shall usher in the Festival of Springtime—the Passover. Never before did the Passover have such vital meaning to us and to all the world as it has today. For we are re-living this drama of thirty-five hundred years ago. We behold with our own eyes the very reincarnation of the cruel Pharaoh—this time enslaving not only the Jew but all the world. Yea, this new tyrant has bettered the instruction of the old Pharaoh!

It is interesting to observe how the Bible describes the Pharaoh of Egypt. In one brief sentence it succeeds in giving us a most striking portrayal of him: "And Pharaoh said, Who is this God that I shall hearken unto His voice . . . I know not the Lord!" The tyrant who knows not God, who tramples upon God's word—that sums up for us his actions, his philosophy.

What makes the modern Pharaoh so dangerous for the world as well as for the Jew is just this, that he knows no God, that he is opposed to all those things that we associate—whether we are Jew or Christian—with the name of God. He represents Satan in

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review is published monthly by the Brooklyn Jewish Center at 667 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y. Manuscripts should be sent to this address and will be carefully considered by the editors. Subscription \$1.00 per year.

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human form, Satan, whose sole delight is the destruction of God's Law.

When the Christian, as well as the Jew, will realize what this new Pharaoh symbolizes for the world, when all nations and all creeds will learn to appreciate this danger that threatens our civilization, then, and only then, will all humanity be able to celebrate a new Passover, a new Festival of Redemption for all the peoples of the earth!

—I. H. I.

THE ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

THE tragedy of Jewry is that it has remained, through long generations, an unknown people. Upon this ignorance, the evils of misunderstanding, prejudice, fear, and suspicion have bidden. Ignorance is the happy hunting ground of aspiring politicians and ambitious dictators. Working upon it, and using it as an instrument for their own nefarious purposes, they drive to power through strife and bloodshed—to the misery of Jews and the rest of the world. They find, in the rooted popular antipathy to diverse elements,—“the dislike of the unlike,” as Israel Zangwill called it—a potent ally, and they press it into ruthless service.

The tragic situation that has now developed cries aloud for more active and resolute counter-action. Those who guide and direct the communal destinies must bend their thoughts to exploring every means of breaking down the barriers of mutual ignorance that stand between the Jew and his neighbor. They have to multiply the means and the opportunities of making the unknown Jew known to the non-Jew.

—From an editorial in the *London Jewish Chronicle*

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JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES—

An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

“בינהו לבן עזבינו”

AN interesting announcement appeared in a recent issue of the *Brooklyn Jewish Center Bulletin*. It told of an innovation adopted by the Trustees and Service Committee relating to the Sabbath services in the Synagogue. We were told that at certain intervals—about once a month—we shall have, as guests, visiting cantors, who will conduct the services. These will be men who have achieved reputations in their respective congregations. They will be invited by our own cantor and the Service Committee.

What makes the Center such an effective institution is that it is not afraid to make innovations when our leaders feel that innovation is essential and beneficial. Our institution has the daring to explore new fields of usefulness. The very idea of the Center itself was quite an innovation in the religious life of the Jews of America, and it is to their ever-lasting credit that our community produced a group of men who had the vision to make this innovation in Synagogue structure, program and organization.

And the virtue of the Brooklyn Jewish Center is that it does not rest,—is never satisfied with what it has accomplished; it feels it must achieve, and can achieve, even more for our religious life. It strives to go “from strength to strength.”

This latest move is evidence of that wide-awake progressive spirit that animates the men and women who lead our institution. We have reason to be proud of our Synagogue services. Judged by comparative standards, our services are well attended. And yet it is felt that there is room for further improvement, and new efforts must be made to win for the Sabbath services many of that mass of Jews who have become estranged from the Synagogue.

It is felt, too, that the religious service in *all* synagogues have this common failing—they tend to become routined. They seem to develop a monotony that tends to destroy their effectiveness as an inspiring influence. As long as the cantor must chant the ser-

vices instead of leading the worshippers in congregational singing it is natural that, no matter how fine and how capable the cantor may be, an element of monotony must enter the entire procedure and must eventually affect the very purpose and aim of the religious service.

This announced innovation may be the effective solution to this vexing problem. The fact that every once in a while the worshipper will come under the spell of a new voice, a new composition, a new melody and a new interpretation of the old prayers, will in itself help to arouse an added interest in, and an added appreciation of, the services regularly rendered on the other Sabbaths.

Then, too, it cannot be denied that *Chazanut*—the Cantoral art—still has a strong hold upon the Jewish masses. The idea that every once in a while new voices and new music will be heard will undoubtedly bring under our influence many Jews whom we have failed thus far to win for the Synagogue. We feel confident that those coming to an institution even occasionally will become more easily assimilated into a better, a more wholesome and more worthwhile Jewish life. It must be added that credit is due our own cantor for his endorsement of this project and for his wholehearted cooperation with the committee in endeavoring to make it a success.

This innovation is but an experiment. If it fails to accomplish what we desire to achieve, we shall have to look for new solutions. If it succeeds, we feel confident that this experiment will be followed by Synagogues throughout the land, and we shall then have the happy feeling of having made one further contribution towards the revitalization of Jewish religious life in America.

Israel H. Levinthal

Uriel da Costa—after Three Hundred Years

ONE DAY in April, 1640, exactly three hundred years ago,* a pistol shot rang out from one of the houses in the little Marano colony of Amsterdam. Quickly a crowd of frightened and excited men gathered. It was the first time that their quiet and peaceful life had been thus disturbed. When the door was forced open and the house entered, Uriel da Costa was found dead at his desk with a bullet wound in his head, one hand rested on the Latin manuscript of his just completed autobiography, "An Example of a Human Life."

His death created a commotion, but little genuine regret among his contemporaries. There may have been a few tears shed by the members of his family, but he had no sooner been buried than he was forgotten. It was the price he paid for a stormy and turbulent life. For many years he had been at odds with his brethren, at odds with the members of his own family, the cause of many conflicts, the center of many quarrels and disputes.

Yet, strange as it may seem, this lonely and tragic figure, lying in an unmarked grave in the ancient cemetery of Oudekerk, is still remembered. All attempts to silence him, to expunge his very name from the records of Jewish history, have failed. Posterity has been kinder to him than his own generation. Men still love to think of him, to pause and ponder his strange life, romantic career and tragic death. No other Marano Jew created so much interest, aroused so much pity, excited so much discussion. He has been made the hero of story and drama, and is the central figure of a swelling literature. From Karl Gutzkow, who immortalized him for the German stage nearly one hundred years ago, to his latest biographer, the story of his sad and

*The dates of Uriel da Costa's birth and death are given variously by the Jewish Encyclopedia, by Graetz and other writers. The present writer, however, accepted the dates used by Carl Gebhardt ("Die Schriften des Uriel da Costa," Amsterdam 1922), and Josef Kasten ("Uriel da Costa," Berlin, 1932) as authoritative, which are: born in Oporto in 1585, died in Amsterdam in April, 1640.

By RABBI JACOB S. MINKIN

tragic life may be read in many books and languages

Uriel da Costa (called Gabriel at his birth) represents another chapter in the long travail and suffering of the Marano Jews. He was a son of Marano parents, and his father, Bento, had adapted himself to his Christian environment with an easy conscience. Bento can be said to have been neither a renegade nor an apostate, but an actor in the Jewish tragedy who played his part perfectly. He was one of those converts who entered into the spirit of their new faith with every semblance of sincerity. Moral deterioration had swept away what spiritual resistance there may originally have been in his mind. The prying eyes of the most zealous Inquisitor could not discover the slightest irregularity in his Christian conduct. He attended church, went to confession, kneeled at the communion table, and observed all the feasts and fasts of his religion with the best of Christians.

He brought up his children, of whom Uriel was the oldest, in the same simple Christian piety that guided his own life. Uriel was a sensitive and impressionable child who, like his father, took religion seriously. There were no spiritual conflicts in his life, for Catholicism was the only religion he knew. What knowledge of Jews and Judaism he had came from the abusive sermons he had heard in the church, or the scornful remarks of his teachers. At his home the subject was never mentioned, and when he inquired, his father was annoyed and irritated, and his mother strangely silent, though her sad and melancholy eyes made him feel that she knew more than she cared to tell.

There were not many outlets in those days for young men seeking a career. Almost all the avenues to success led through the holy orders. What talent and intelligence existed were in service of the Church. When Uriel, therefore, grew older and his future career



Uriel da Costa and Spinoza as a child pictured by the artist S. Hirszenberg

(Courtesy of The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia)

was to be considered, he was sent to the University of Coimbra to prepare himself for ecclesiastical jurisprudence. The university was a religious school, a Jesuit institution. Monks and priests were the teachers, and religion was the principal subject of instruction. Even the so-called secular subjects were taught in an atmosphere of theology. It was also a strictly regimented and standardized school, with no room for originality, no opportunity for creative development. Everything had been regulated for the student — his waking and sleeping, his amusements and diversions, the very thoughts that passed through his mind. Nothing was left to chance; imagination was not allowed to run riot; a sharp surveillance was kept over everything.

Uriel responded to the religious atmosphere of the school perfectly. It was the environment in which he had been brought up and the call of his own inner being. He was a model student with whom not even the most exacting teacher could find any fault. The bell never had to rouse him; he anticipated its call by several hours of reading and study. But, while law books had been his principal companions, religion continued to be his favorite subject. He became fanatically pious, praying with fervor and in a spirit of deep devotion. He subdued the needs of food, drink and sleep till they had no meaning for him.

Imaginary sins began to possess him; the fear of damnation shadowed his every step. Yet, there was nothing he could do, for, was there a prayer he had not recited, a shrine he had not frequented, a holy image before which he had not kneeled? He thought that a holy life would give him the peace and tranquility he sought. To this purpose he copied the example of the grimiest ascetics and adopted their method till his face was pale from fasting and his eyes dim from weeping. Now, as long as he prayed, he felt relieved, and a great peace would come over him, but with the last word of the prayers, his fears would return again.

Thus Uriel lived, feeling himself lost and rejected. The perplexities that troubled him recurred more often the longer his mind dwelled on them. His fears were like drops of ink falling on the same spot and running together in one black blot. How much longer could he permit himself to dwell on these thoughts? Madness lay that way — madness and the watching demons

lurking in the shadows. Feeling him self harassed and beaten, he longed to escape in death. He even contemplated suicide.

Suddenly, a faint shadow of doubt, like a small dark nimbus, began to form in his mind. Was it the call of blood, the voice of stilled tradition, or something of the subtle Jewish spirit which had not yet been altogether dead in his nature? The deeper he delved into the mysteries of the Catholic religion, the more preoccupied he was with the Jesuit teachings, the larger and larger grew the cloud of doubt until it almost completely covered his mind. The Church had disappointed him, failed to give him the peace and tranquility for which his soul had been longing — could these things be had outside her domain?

To trace Christianity to its core he read the Old Testament from which it sprang. He more than merely skimmed its pages, but let its words, its very letters flow through his mind. What a fresh breath, like a cool summer breeze, blew from its pages, confused and disfigured though it was in its Latin guise! Its grand style, oriental imagery and lofty religious and ethical sentiments appealed to him more than any book he had read. At last Uriel had found his anchor! He was confused and troubled no more. His imaginary sins no longer frightened him, and the prospects of hell and damnation had no terror for him. The Bible had not a word to say about the things that almost brought him to spiritual desperation. The discovery shook the very foundations of his Christian faith.

None but Uriel's own soul knew what all this cost him, for he was not a man whose faith could be shaken without the deepest pain. Christianity had been the religion of his childhood; his fondest recollections were bound up with the faith of his home and school. It was as if a cruel, torturing hand had been laid upon his innermost being. But religion must be true in its entirety; it cannot be half true and half false. Unless it is true in its every part, it is no religion at all, but a galling bondage upon the soul.

It was thus that the quick, impulsive, impetuous Uriel forsook Christianity, at least in his heart, and became a Jew — a Jew as in his imagination he had conceived Jews to be, an idealized Jew, the replica of the Old Testament Israelite.

Was this the resolution of his own mind, or a determination fired by the active propaganda of the local Marano group of which Antonio Homen, a member of the Coimbra faculty, was the most conspicuous figure? His own autobiography contains no information on the question. But for Uriel his mental torments had only begun, for it galled him to play the hypocrite; it tortured him to have to live a life of spiritual deception. It was a moral delinquency that filled him with shame and self-accusation. To escape the vigilant eyes of the Inquisition, he still carried out the symbols of the Christian religion, although his soul no longer responded to these things. They were the burnt-out ashes of a fire that no longer warmed or inspired him. For a man in his position, the logical thing to have done was to confess his guilt and take the consequences, but he knew how unforgiving the Church was to those who betrayed her cause. He, therefore, suffered and waited.

He had not long to wait, for, upon his graduation, he returned to Oporto, the city of his birth. Months, perhaps several years, Uriel lived in spiritual duplicity, outwardly carrying out all the gestures of the Christian religion, while inwardly obeying the mandates of his new creed. At last the time came to throw off the disguise and flee to a land where he might live as a Jew. Cautiously he communicated his intention to his mother and brothers — his father was already dead — and together they resolved to expose themselves to the danger of secret emigration, to abandon their hearth and home, surrender their respected position in society and exchange the comfort and security of their life for an unknown future.

It was to Amsterdam they had fled, that strange and remarkable Jewish community almost all of whose members had been born and brought up as Christians. Some had even been prelates and high Church dignitaries. Uriel had to learn everything anew, for now he was in the company of Jews to whom Judaism was no longer a secret conviction but a living practice. He carried out the numerous prescriptions of his new creed conscientiously, and complied with everything his instructors had declared to be the law. We may picture to ourselves Uriel assiduously attending synagogue, listening to the sermons, and applying

(Continued on page 21)

BLACKOUT IN POLAND

By ARTHUR SETTEL

If everything else associated with his name be forgotten, Hitler's dastardly work in Poland will be remembered in history as the crowning achievement of a madman. Cruel and relentless as the Nazi repressions in Germany have been, they pale beside the reign of terror now raging in western Poland. Eyewitness reports by impartial observers, authenticated by the recent statement of Cardinal Hlond to the Vatican, and by victims who escape to neighboring countries, paint an unbelievable picture of torture, persecution and degradation to which Jews in particular and Poles in general are being subjected. What is happening in Poland today dwarfs into insignificance the plight in which that country's 3,500,000 Jews found themselves prior to the Nazi-Soviet joint invasion. Let us compare pre-war (1939) Polish with Nazi anti-Semitism.

Six months ago Polish Jewry was as a whole an indigent, unhappy people, marked out for emigration and **expulsion**, with little hope of ever improving their lot. They were long accustomed to poverty and familiar with political fanaticism which, in all too many instances, flared up and grew into pogroms. Their plight was described by a correspondent for the *New York Times*, who toured the country in 1937, in these words:

"The Jews' plight in Poland, which comprises all the problems of national minorities in the most aggravated form, is in the last analysis the result of a conscious effort by the Government to make Poland a big Polish power by 'Polonizing' whatever domains are still held by minorities, especially the Jews."

In the name of Polish patriotism, Jews were ground under the heel of brutal terrorism in city, town and country. The Government made no bones over its intention to "evacuate" its Jewish population—all 3,500,000 of them—at some future time when arrangements could be made for their emigration. The Government was enthusiastic about Zionism for the reason that Zionism was synonymous with emigration. Anti-Jewish boycotts fostered by systematic anti-Jewish propaganda were easily used to provoke pogroms. A speaker's statement or a newspaper editorial to the ef-

fect that the "Jews were getting too fresh" or that the Jews "were trying to grab everything," was enough to elicit a hearty response from a mob, and in the small towns Jewish windows would be duly smashed, homes burned down, pedestrians assaulted and boycotts introduced. The reactionary press, listing Jewish enterprises in various localities, could make this editorial comment:

"Thirty-six Jews are making a living here—they are depriving thirty-six patriotic Poles of a livelihood."

Unemployed hoodlums were employed to picket Jewish shops. Poles buying from Jews were photographed, identified and their names conspicuously published. Peasants selling their produce to Jews were beaten. Polish artisans marked their wares with special brands so that "patriots" might not make the mistake of buying Jewish goods. Motivated by "national interests," the Government established license and educational requirements for artisans and merchants—requirements which were too "rigid" for Jews to meet. The only domain in which no anti-Semitism was to be found was the Army, and as members of the military the Jews proved their mettle, for they had died in the defense of Poland for many generations. In the defense of the nation against the German armies of 1939 the heroism of the Jews has become legendary, their losses having been colossal.

The appalling poverty of the Jewish masses in Poland was offset by the curiously contradictory fact that Jews were dominant in certain important industries and in many spheres of commercial enterprise, a fact which contributed to their unpopularity. Rabble rousers had no difficulty showing that Jews controlled the national economy, for on paper the "facts" bore them out. For instance, Polish Jews controlled sixty-five per cent of the country's trade and commerce. Polish Jews filled twenty per cent of the professions, comprised thirty per cent of all of the country's lawyers and fifty per cent of all the country's physicians. Only 5.8 per cent were engaged in agriculture, and 5 per cent were day laborers, 86 per cent of them living

in towns and cities. Polish Jews formed their own exclusive business, trade and commercial organizations which by virtue of their size and concentration, completely ruled certain industries and even towns. In fact, they formed a "state within a state," with the consequence that they were vulnerable to attack.

This is the explanation advanced by Otto Tolischus, *New York Times* correspondent, who toured the country:

"Any idea of opulence that may be conveyed this this social distribution is quickly dispelled by the fact of Poland's general poverty . . . The vast majority of the Jews listed in commerce, trade and industry are small shopkeepers, with a high percentage of them mere peddlers whose whole stock-in-trade is around twenty *zlotys* (a *zloty* was the equivalent of 19c) and whose daily income is less than one *zloty*. These Jewish peddlers who have given the Polish landscape a characteristic note are pictures of walking misery, but even they are envied by many peasants earning still less."

One of the indications that starkly revealed the poverty of the Jewish population of Poland was the high percentage of those who applied to the Community Councils (*Kehilloth*) or other organizations for holiday aid during Passover. A survey published not long ago by the Statistical Department of the Central Bureau of the Free Loan Society, founded by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, revealed that more than 100,000 persons, or 25,000 families in the 166 towns in Central Poland, constituting 24 per cent of the total Jewish population of 460,000 in these towns, had applied for Passover relief. For the cities of Warsaw, Lodz, Byalistok, Lemberg and Wilno, the figures were even more startling. In Lodz, applications were received by the *Kehilla* for Passover aid from 12,000 families, or 29 per cent of the entire Jewish population there. In Warsaw, 28 per cent of the Jewish population of 350,000 applied for Passover aid. In Byalistok, the local philanthropic organization granted Passover aid to 14,333 persons, or 32.1

per cent of the Jewish population. In Wilno, the *Kehilla* granted Passover aid to 13,000 persons, or 23.2 per cent of the Jewish population. In Lemberg, 51,151 individuals, (11,367 families), that is, 55.4 per cent of the Jewish population, received such aid from the *Kehilla*. The survey pointed out that not all who needed it applied for Passover assistance. "It is therefore necessary to state," the survey reported, "that the proportion of the destitute in these towns is much higher than one-third of the Jewish population."

The survey indicated that 69.2 per cent of the relief applicants stated that they were unemployed, while the remainder did not earn a sufficient living for their families. A third of the applicants lived in "nooks" in the homes of others; half of the families lived in single rooms; twelve per cent occupied cold attics or cellars.

Chief Rabbi Prof. Moses Schorr, of the Warsaw Great Synagogue, wrote:

"The economic degradation of Polish Jewry and the hardships connected with their struggle for a bare existence have lately assumed such proportions that not only the leaders of Polish Jewry have become greatly alarmed, but, also, every Jew abroad who feels that the safeguarding of the existence of our Polish brethren is the indispensable condition for the safeguarding of the moral and spiritual values inherent in the greatest Jewish community in Europe."

Such was the situation in Poland a little over half a year ago, prior to the partition of the land between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The Nazi invasion, with its consequent brutalities, has decimated the population. The impoverished have become vastly more poor, and the well-to-do have been reduced to worse than poverty. In Russia of course Jewish along with all other property owners were levelled off: even the simplest pushcart peddler had his livelihood taken from him. But in Nazi-controlled Poland whence hundreds of thousands have attempted to escape over the new frontier, Jews have been given a lesson in brutalitarianism such as has not been seen in Europe since the days of mediaeval barbarism.

The full details of the plight of Jews in Nazi Poland will probably never be known. Diluted by the censor's pencil, reduced in transmission, news from Poland as carried out by

victimized refugees is nonetheless available in all its arresting, depressing gruesomeness. In the course of a reign of terror which pales the pre-War excesses by comparison, and which becomes increasingly more brutal and steadily more terrible, tens of thousands of Jews have been forced to suicide. Synagogues were burned, homes destroyed, villages wiped out. After driving Jewish residents of Warsaw into a ghetto, the area was barricaded from the rest of the city. Epidemics of typhoid and other diseases raging in the ghetto district continued unchecked as Nazi authorities refuse to render or deliver medical and sanitary aid.

Nazis seize men and women and herd them into "forced labor" battalions—the Germans use the word *Arbeitszwang*—and the treatment accorded them would not be wished upon cattle. Thousands have been forced into open freight trains and trucks during mid-winter and taken to the "reservation" in Lublin, on the Soviet-Nazi Polish frontier—presumably a potential "buffer state." Dr. Hans Frank, Nazi Governor General in Poland, says there is "plenty of room" in Lublin. But there isn't plenty of room except perhaps in the open fields, where many Jews are dying in the cold or starving to death, food being all but unobtainable. Cardinal Hlond's report spoke of hundreds of men, women and children being herded like beasts into a barn where they died like flies, and where their bodies were left to rot unburied.

In many cities, notably Lodz, Kielce and Cracow, where 600,000 Jews face immediate expulsion to make way for Baltic Germans, Jews are plundered and assaulted on the streets and in their homes. They are forbidden to buy clothes shoes, bread, milk. Even Polish Christians are being hounded from their homes. The arrested aren't told the reason, aren't told their fate. The ashes of those executed in concentration camps are mailed to their families at the latter's expense. A recent authenticated dispatch told of 1,400 Jews, mostly women and children, who were left stranded in the Brok forest after the Soviet frontier had been closed.

The tales of Nazi barbarism can be recounted far beyond the limits of this article. Their authenticity has been proved beyond any doubt. The

New York Times reported on Feb. 22 that American Red Cross workers would not be allowed to enter Nazi Poland with the exception of the Warsaw district. The reason obviously is fear lest the world see through the eyes of the U. S. Red Cross what is going on under Nazi rule. The Soviet Government is equally adamant in its refusal to allow the distribution of relief. Mention is made in this dispatch of mass deportations by Nazis of Polish Jews, and of "whole-sale sterilization of Polish prisoners."

Despite what appears to be a hopeless situation, it is still possible to help a great many Jews. It is significant, and a comforting thought, that certain avenues for distributing relief still exist. The Joint Distribution Committee is feeding hundreds of thousands of men, women and children throughout Poland, and, as funds are made available, many will be helped to emigrate. There is little more that can be said at this time. But, upon American Jewry there rests a grave responsibility: that of saving their fellow Jews now being crushed under the iron heel of totalitarianism in Europe. It is a responsibility that cannot be ignored.*

ARYAN "TSITSIS" MAKERS?

HUNGARY'S "6% laws," which restrict the number of Jews in every industry to 6% of the total number engaged in that industry, have their ludicrous, though also tragic aspects. In one city, where all the Jews are engaged in manufacturing "tsitsis," or ritual fringed shawls, the government required 94 Christians to be employed for every six Jews in factories producing this article. Since the Jews, however, could not countenance such a sacrilege, the industry fell to pieces and the Jews of the city lost their means of livelihood. A comforting concomitant of these laws was the discovery, when government investigators sought to see that the Jews did not exceed the permissible percentage in the prostitution "industry," that the Jewish representation was far below the proportion to which they were legally "entitled."

*The Joint Distribution Committee is raising its 1940 fund through the United Jewish Appeal for Refugees and Overseas Needs.

THE PASSING OF CYRUS ADLER

By DR. E. N. RABINOWITZ

WITH the death of Dr. Cyrus Adler, American Jewry lost a devoted Jew, a fine scholar and a cultured gentleman. To the stranger, Cyrus Adler gave the impression of aloofness, of coldness, of hauteur, but closer knowledge of the man dispelled this view and disclosed a personality of fine sensibilities, genuine, courteous, humane, witty.

The Jewish Theological Seminary was fortunate in the choice of its presidents. Its first president and founder, Sabbato Morais, was a man of unusual ability and character. To me, as a lad, Sabbato Morais seemed the very embodiment of saintliness. This, however, was not only my opinion. It was the feeling of the entire Jewish community of Philadelphia of more than forty years ago, so that upon his demise in 1897 many a Jew of South Philadelphia, then the colony of the East European Jews named their newly born male child after the beloved Rabbi.

The second president of the Seminary was the gifted Solomon Schechter. It is, of course, needless to dwell here on the characteristics of this unusual man. Much has been said and written concerning him since his death in 1915. As a personal recollection, I may say that Prof. Schechter's geniality, originality, humor and occasional biting sarcasm left an indelible impression upon all privileged to come in close contact with the man.

Dr. Adler was unlike his predecessors. He was a man of many activities—scholar, editor, man of letters, administrator and executive. He was a man of affairs whose name figured prominently in all major Jewish movements. Nor were his efforts merely casual. He put his soul into all his undertakings. We must marvel at the extent of his interests, and his capacity for work as president of two schools of higher learning, as president of the American Jewish Committee, as chairman of numerous boards and committees, as active member of many organizations, as editor, as public speaker. In his attitude, nevertheless, Dr. Adler remained the scholar and the man of letters. The dust of the arena never clung to his person.

Perhaps, under the tutelage of his friend and relative, the distinguished jurist, Meyer Sulzberger, of Phila-

delphia, Cyrus Adler planned early in life to enter the legal profession. However, upon his graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, he was attracted to the newly formed Department of Semitics at Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore, and registered as the first student of Semitics at that famous school. A full description of his experiences at the Semitic Seminary of the University may be found in his "Letters, Selected Papers and Addresses," published in Philadelphia in 1933.

Dr. Adler received his Ph.D. in 1887, but remained at the University as Fellow in Semitics. He was subsequently appointed instructor and first assistant to the celebrated Semitist, Prof. Paul Haupt. Such an appointment was no small matter to a young man. The fact that Dr. Haupt accepted him as assistant is due evidence that he had made his mark in the field of Orientalia. Dr. Haupt, as I can recollect, possessed one of the most brilliant minds that I knew. In the field of linguistics and philology he had few peers. As a young man, Dr. Haupt made excellent discoveries in the study of Assyriology. It is unfortunate that he later became so deeply involved in the study of the Higher Criticism of the Old Testament. His attempts to outdo Wellhausen and the other Bible critics in his interpretations of the Holy Script led him to ludicrous results. He was, however, a very discriminating scholar and, undoubtedly, recognized Cyrus Adler's capabilities when he chose him as his first assistant. Dr. Adler left Johns Hopkins University in 1893 to become librarian at the Smithsonian Institute, in Washington, D. C.

In his early years, Dr. Adler evinced a great interest in Oriental Studies, as is evidenced by the great number of articles and reviews on Hebrew and kindred subjects recorded in his book. Between 1883 and 1893, his bibliography enumerates 153 articles and reviews, covering a great variety of subjects. These articles display his interest in Assyriology, Archaeology, Paleontology, Etymology, among other subjects. Dr. Adler also manifests a wide range of knowledge of Semitic



Cyrus Adler

linguistics, including all the known Semitic tongues. Of distinctly Jewish subjects, there are not so many. I may single out here his article, "On the Etymology of the Hebrew word for year, *Shanah*" in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, London, 1889, Vol. I. page 288, and his article on "The Shofar—Its Use and Origin," published in the *U. S. National Museum Proceedings*, 1893. The limited number of articles on distinctly Jewish subjects may be due to the fact that while Dr. Adler's attainments in the field of Semitics was vast, he was not an outstanding Hebraist or Talmudist. This he undoubtedly realized. His appreciation of Talmudic and Rabbinic studies was great, and his encouragement of savants in those fields unlimited.

In later years, when Dr. Adler assumed so many responsibilities that most of us wonder how one man could have borne such burdens, his written word consisted mostly of reports, addresses, memoranda. All his writings display a lucidity of style which bespeak his thorough grasp of the matter with which he was dealing.

In 1904, Dr. Adler edited, and wrote an introduction to, the so-called Jefferson Bible, in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Fifty-seventh Congress, first session. A full discus-

sion of this subject is found in his article, "The Jefferson Bible," printed in his "Lectures, Printed Papers, and Addresses," pages 32-42. This article is in reality a reprint of Adler's introduction to Thomas Jefferson's "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth," otherwise known as the Jefferson Bible."

In 1904, after the Kishineff massacres of the year previous, he also edited and published through the Jewish Publication Society a volume entitled, "The Voice of America on Kishineff." This work is of no special interest to us, at present, except that it is a sad commentary on the present time. American public opinion in 1903 was aroused to a high pitch of indignation by a massacre which compared to prevailing conditions is mere child's play.

Dr. Adler's major work in his later years was his "Life and Letters of Jacob Schiff," in two volumes. Its value consists not only in relating the life of one of America's most remarkable Jews but in presenting a cross-section of American Jewry during a half century of its most formative period. In this sketch of the Schiff family we came across such leaders of American Jewry as Meyer Sultzberger, Louis Marshall, Solomon Schechter, Felix Warburg, and others. All these great and noble men have passed away. Cyrus Adler was the last to depart.

Dr. Adler's skill as biographer is also shown in his presentations of the lives of various Jewish leaders. His articles on Louis Marshall and Solomon Schechter are masterful. Since the article on Schechter appeared in the American Jewish Year Book of 1916-17 a complete biography of Schechter by Norman Bentwich has been published by the Jewish Publication Society.

Besides his own scholarly and literary work, Dr. Adler did much for the cultural advancement of his people through the establishment of, and participation in, institutions for the dissemination of Jewish learning, literature and history. For many years he was an active member of the Jewish Publication Society, and chairman of its various important committees. Although not the originator of the idea of the American Jewish Historical Society, he organized the first meeting for its creation, served as its secretary from 1892-98, and was its president from 1898-1922. At the

same time, he was a member of the Editorial Board of the Jewish Encyclopedia, and took charge of the editing of its articles on Post-Biblical Antiquities, and on Jews in America. The *London Jewish Quarterly Review*, having gone out of existence at the turn of the century, was re-established in this country in 1910 and edited by Dr. Adler. He was always prepared to give a helping hand to one desirous to engage in research in his own initiative. For this, I can vouch from personal experience. When I met Dr. Adler in Paris after the armis-

stice he was extremely busy with affairs of state, but he managed to find time to discuss with me the publication of a certain Yemenite manuscript. It was through his efforts that the late Mortimer Schiff, then in Paris, became interested. A few years later the book was published through a subsidy granted by Mr. Schiff.

The last century produced quite a number of representative Jews of great spiritual nature. Dr. Adler was the last of that company. Will there be others of their like? Only the future will tell.

I AM A HEBREW

By CYRUS ADLER

I WILL continue to hold my banner aloft. I find myself born—ay, born—into a people and a religion. The preservation of my people must be for a purpose, for God does nothing without a purpose. His reasons are unfathomable to me, but on my own reason I place little dependence; tested where I will it fails me. The simple, the ultimate in every direction is sealed to me. It is as difficult to understand matter as mind. The courses of the planets are no harder to explain than the growth of a blade of grass. Therefore am I willing to

remain a link in the great chain. What has been preserved for 4000 years was not saved that I should overthrow it. My people have survived the pre-historic paganism, the Babylonian polytheism, the aesthetic Hellenism, the sagacious Romanism, at once the blandishments and persecutions of the Church; and it will survive the modern dilettantism and the current materialism, holding aloft the traditional Jewish ideals inflexibly until the world shall become capable of recognizing their worth.

PASSOVER VOCABULARY

SEDER means "order" or program of exercises at the home celebration. A practice to be encouraged is that of several families uniting to celebrate the Seder.

HAGADAH means "story." It is our duty to tell the story of Passover, particularly to the children.

MATZOH is the unleavened bread eaten in recollection of the hurried departure from Egypt. The eating of the matzoh is obligatory only at the Seder evening. During the rest of the Pesach, one may abstain from matzoh, so long as he avoids all hametz.

THE FOUR CUPS. Each has a specific place in the service. The first serves as the KIDDUSH, the second is taken at the conclusion of the first part of the Seder. The third is the cup marking the conclusion of the grace after the meal, while the fourth cup comes at the conclusion of the

Seder. The four cups are said to refer to the four promises of redemption made by God to Israel.

THE CUP OF ELIJAH. The celebration of the redemption of Israel would be incomplete without the symbolic representation of Israel's imperishable hope of the greater redemption of the future. Jewish tradition pictures Elijah as the herald of the great Messianic era—when God's reign will be fully established amongst men. Hence a cup is kept ready and is designated as the "Cup of Elijah." Incidentally, this is a symbol of the warm hospitality extended to strangers in every Jewish home on the Seder eve.

KARPAS or parsley, is made part of the meal to signify a festive supper as befits a great occasion. The additional relishes are dipped in salt water to make them palatable. The child

(Continued on page 19)

"MAH NISHTANO"

By FLORENCE LIPKIN

He listened as the heavy tread of their boots echoed and re-echoed down the hall, down the stairs. He heard the doors of their cars slamming shut and the motors starting. They had told him he could no longer keep his business. He was a non-Aryan, and they gave him the usual brief period to settle his affairs.

He sat still and silent at his desk, his well-worn desk, the desk that had been his father's and his grandfather's before him.

A discreet tap at the door and his secretary came in.

"It is ready, Herr Braun. And oh, how good it is!"

She held out a plate towards him. On it, laid out in an inviting pattern, were oblong bits an inch long and perhaps a quarter of an inch deep, with the corners rounded off gracefully. Through the transparent crystal-like coating could be seen a darker filling.

"Herr Braun, the new candy. It is ready. It is so good. Taste one."

He raised his head at last and looked into the girl's smiling face.

"The new candy, Herr Braun. It is so much better than anything we have ever put out. It is so different." She extended the plate towards him across the desk. Only then did she see that he did not smile, that his eyes were dull and his mouth sad with an unspeakable sadness. "Herr Braun!" Her voice was a frightened whisper. The plate made a small sound as she put it down on the wooden top of the desk. "Herr Braun!" His lips strove to speak, but he could only continue to look at her. She did not know. She had been in the factory waiting for the new candy to be ready, the new candy that was going to add so much to the prestige of Braun Brothers, who were already known throughout the world as the foremost makers of candy. For over a hundred years their tidbits in gayly-colored wrappers had traveled to all parts of the globe. But now it was to be theirs no longer. He had to get out—get out.

The smile had vanished from her lips, but she tried again. She picked up the plate.

"The new candy, Herr Braun."

He fumbled for one of the tiny oblong bits. It was smooth, almost silken to the touch. He turned it round and

round in his fingers, just as he had always done in testing a new product, and with the same accustomed gesture, he held it up to the light. But now he did not find pleasure in the clear transparency around the tiny layer of filling in the center. He continued to hold it up to the light, turning it round and round, his hands performing the accustomed task, but his eyes unseeing.

"Taste it," the girl urged gently.

Like an automaton responding to the pressure of a button, he put the bit of candy into his mouth. It was silkier to his tongue than to his fingers. He crunched through the thin coating to the filling, and the flavor filled his mouth.

"Is it not good? Is it not different?"

He nodded his head and the movement once started, he could not seem to stop it. He nodded his head heavily, in a gesture that was no longer consent. He lost himself in his nodding, and he sighed deeply.

"The printer is here." The girl's voice reflected her bewilderment. "He wants to know what to put on the wrappers. What are we going to call it?"

For the first time he spoke. "Call it? Yes, it must have a name."

"A good name, because it is such a good candy." Encouraged by his response, she hoped by her enthusiasm to restore him to his usual good humor. She could not understand what had happened to Herr Braun.

"Yes, it is a good candy. It must have a good name." He spoke like a child repeating a lesson.

"It is so different."

"Ah, yes, different."

"We must let the world know that it is different. We must give it a good name."

"Yes, we must let the world know that it is different."

She wished he would not repeat her words after her that way.

"What are we going to call it?" she insisted.

"Call it? Call it? Ah, yes, it must have a name. It is different. We must let the world know that it is different." His voice rose to a higher pitch, and he suddenly raised himself from

his chair and began to stride about the room. "We must let the world know it is different—that everything is different." He pressed his hands to his brow. The girl stepped back, staring at him as he strode up and down the room. Suddenly he stopped and stared down at the plate of candy. He picked up a piece.

"Yes, we must let the world know it is different. Everything is different." He spoke more calmly now. "Yes, we will send a message out into the world. They will understand, those out in the world. The others—they will only think it some queer name—and if they ask, we will say it means the candy is different. But out in the world, they will understand our message. We will call it—*Mah Nishtano*. Why is it different?" — *Mah Nishtano*. They will know. Their forefathers asked the question throughout the years. They will understand what we are trying to say. *Mah Nishtano*—why is it different?"

A JEWISH CREDO

WE HAVE an abiding faith that mankind will rid itself of these aberrations that are now afflicting a part of the earth. Neither Alexander, nor Caesar, nor Napoleon lasted, and their puny imitators of modern times will not last either.

"Jews should know the Hebrew language, and not purely for secular purposes. They should know their Bible and learn to be uplifted by its grandeur. They should read their history and their literature, know something about the great philosophers and poets, and altogether feel, even in the midst of this outpouring of filthy lies and abuse which are being showered upon them, that they belong to a people still in existence. We cannot muster armies, we cannot build navies and we cannot compete with the air fleets of the world, but by this study we can build a citadel in our own hearts which none can conquer."

"It would be an evil day in Judaism as it would be in the world, if philanthropy should become the sole virtue and serve as a substitute for religion, morality and justice."

—CYRUS ADLER

BROOKLYN JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMPLETES ORGANIZATION

By JOSEPH GOLDBERG

AT the general conference held at the Brooklyn Jewish Center on April 14th, delegates representing some of the leading and most influential organizations in the Borough perfected the organization of the Brooklyn Jewish Community Council. The conference was the culmination of months of diligent planning and careful deliberation on the part of a group of men who were chosen to assume the task of furthering this venture, and of bringing it to the point where it might begin to function actively in Jewish life.

Now that the preliminary steps of organization have been completed, it might be of some advantage to review its brief history in the hope that it will be of interest to those who follow the trend of events in Jewish communal life in this country. The Brooklyn Jewish Center feels proud that it was instrumental in helping to bring about this movement. For the first time in the history of Brooklyn a serious attempt was made to unify the largest Jewish community in the country so that it may be properly represented in all matters wherein Jewish interests are involved.

The movement was born at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Brooklyn Jewish Center. Setting aside, for the time being, the problems facing its own institution, the members of the Board discussed at length the increased menace of racial and religious discrimination in the Borough, and the lack of a centralized authority to deal with this and other problems that daily confront us as Jews. Dr. Moses Spatt, who initiated the discussion, was appointed head of a committee to study this matter and to present a report. Meetings followed and conferences were held with organizations actively engaged in similar work on a national scale. The committee received their promises of active cooperation, and was encouraged to proceed with its work.

On October 31, 1939, an invitation was issued signed by Rabbi Israel H. Levinthal, Joseph M. Schwartz, president of the Center and Dr. Moses Spatt, chairman, calling a conference of Jewish religious organizations for Thursday evening, November 16. Fif-

ty-five synagogues, temples and Centers, orthodox, conservative and reform, were represented through rabbis, presidents and other officers. The response was most enthusiastic. Speaker after speaker expressed satisfaction that at long last the Jews of Brooklyn were about to take this vitally important step. The practical result of the conference was the authorization to proceed with an organization that would be representative of all elements of Brooklyn Jewry, and which would be democratically chosen.

A committee of twenty-three worked out the program of organization. The plan was then submitted to a second conference held on January 11, 1940, and was thoroughly debated by the delegates representing various organizations. The formation of a Brooklyn Jewish Community Council was thereupon authorized, and its objects were defined as follows:

1. To unite all Brooklyn Jewish organizations elected to membership into one representative council; to speak and to act as a collective body in all matters pertaining to, and affecting the welfare of, the Jewish population in Brooklyn.
2. To foster mutual understanding and the spirit of fraternity among the people of all races and of all creeds.
3. To combat all forces of racial or religious discrimination, and to help safeguard and defend the constitutional, civil and religious rights of all people whenever such rights are challenged or in jeopardy, and to cooperate with other organizations for such purposes.

The conference outlined the method of representation to the Council, and authorized the appointment of a nominating committee for the election of officers and members of the Board of Directors, this election to take place at a subsequent general conference of organizations in Brooklyn representing all Jewry.

A Constitution and By-Laws Committee was appointed, with Mr. Louis J. Moss as chairman. The Nominating Committee was headed by Rabbi

Sidney S. Tedesche. The responsibility for perfecting the machinery for the general conference was entrusted to a committee headed by Samuel Rotenberg. These committees worked diligently and faithfully, sparing neither time nor energy to fulfill their assigned task. They represented different outlooks on Jewish life, but they worked harmoniously, animated by one purpose only, to achieve unity in communal responsibility. Few people can realize the tremendous task that was theirs, and the efforts they expended on the organization of the Council.

Officially and legally, the Brooklyn Jewish Community Council began to function on March 20, 1940, when the certificate of incorporation was approved by Supreme Court Justice Philip A. Brennan, and filed in Albany, New York.

The general conference on April 14 was representative of a large portion of the Jewish population of Brooklyn. It included delegates from most of the leading Jewish organizations in all parts of the Borough. The Constitution was adopted and was followed by the election of the officers and members of the Board of Directors of the Council. The organization is now headed by our own revered and beloved Rabbi Levinthal, who will be assisted by a fine group of men and women whose outstanding work in the community promises success for the Council. Those who attended the conference will long remember the seriousness with which the delegates followed the proceedings and the enthusiasm they displayed for the task involved. The singleness of purpose displayed has seldom been witnessed at conferences and meetings of a similar nature.

The delegates expressed themselves as fortunate in having Dr. Levinthal as their leader. They regard him as one who commands the esteem, admiration and confidence of all groups in the community.

The Brooklyn Jewish Community Council has made a splendid beginning. May it grow and prosper!

REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS

By JACOB KAPLAN

"As A Driven Leaf"
By Milton Steinberg

THE historical novel has become a major force in the literature of our day. Particularly, European novelists like Thomas Mann, Leon Feuchtwanger and Franz Werfel have in recent years given us historical works which are affirmations of the progressive traditions of mankind. Theirs have not been historical novels concerned with turning our eyes from the modern scene to the remote past. Rather, they have used their delineations of the past as a means of analogy with the present. Their works have been parables with a lesson for modernity.

Milton Steinberg's novel, "As A Driven Leaf," (The Bobbs-Merrill Company, \$2.50, 480 pages) is one of the few attempts by an American writer to invade the specific realm of historical fiction practiced by these European literary giants. For his work is unquestionably parabolic. With calm, scholarly eye Dr. Steinberg has scrutinized the *zeitgeist* of his own day. He sees the world of our day affected by the scourge of anti-Semitism. He realizes that the plight of the European Jew, driven from pillar to post, has given rise to an abysmal pessimism on the part of many who wonder wearily whether they are witnessing the annihilation of Jewry. Further, as a religious leader, Dr. Steinberg sees a conflict in our generation between religion, on the one hand, and scientific doctrine, on the other. He finds our time particularly lacking in faith. He sees modern winds of doctrine causing scepticism rather than faith. His novel is, therefore, a passionate protest against pessimism regarding the fate of Jewry, an affirmation of the need for faith in our day.

Dr. Steinberg takes us back to the Roman Empire of 100-135 A.D., to the time of the Antonine Emperors, Trajan and Hadrian. This was a period in which the Jews engaged in a last desperate fight for national existence under the Roman Empire. In the seige of Jerusalem of 70 A.D. the Jews had lost more than a million people. In 131 A.D. the Jews were in revolt again, and Jerusalem was once more destroyed by the Romans. The world was as bitterly con-

fused as it is today. A profound pessimism affected many Jews, even as it does today. Conflict existed between the materialistic philosophy and science of the Greco-Roman culture and the spiritual religion of the Jew. Many floundered in their search for truth. Against this background the story of Elisha ben Abuyah becomes the eternal story of a man's quest for a true philosophy of life, as well as an allegory with pertinence to our times. Like Feuchtwanger's *Jud Suss*, Elisha's story is one of a search for faith. Like Feuchtwanger's character, he makes the discovery that the consciousness of his Jewishness is worth all the glitter and tinsel of the cosmopolitan world.

Elisha is brought up in Palestine, the son of a Jew converted to Hellenism. The early death of his father, however, causes his uncle to bring him up in the faith of his ancestors. By diligent study, he becomes a respected Rabbi of the Sanhédrin, the Jewish Parliament. An unhappy marriage gives him a sense of personal frustration which leads to a general scepticism about the world. He turns to the Greco-Roman schools of philosophy—the Epicureans, the Cynics, the Stoics. He becomes obsessed with the idea that faith may be placed on a plane as rational and as scientific as Euclidean geometry. His loss of faith results in his excommunication from the Sanhedrin and ostracism from the Jewish community. He throws himself completely into the life of Antioch, the great Roman metropolis. He devotes himself to prove the existence of God by mathematical and philosophical formulas. Contact with Roman life convinced him that the Roman imperialist system was destined to make progress for civilization, that the Jewish world was doomed to complete extinction in this Roman world.

In the end, however, Elisha discovers that his attempt to arrive at a syllogistic proof of God's existence is a failure. Every syllogism, he finds requires an act of faith in that man must postulate as its basis some hypothetical principal. This, coupled with the heroism of the Jewish people, particularly the members of the Sanhedrin in their revolt in 131 A.D., resurrects his religious faith in Judaism. He becomes convinced that the Ro-

man Imperium failed miserably in the most important respect—justice for the individual. Finally, he realizes, people with the heroism of the Jew could never be extinguished. Time certainly has proven the truth of this conclusion of Elisha and Dr. Steinberg.

All in all, Dr. Steinberg has written a scholarly and timely work. Any one familiar with the period of the Antonine Emperors will agree that Dr. Steinberg has given a thoroughly authentic version of the period. One may, perhaps, dispute his portrait of Trajan as weary with war and conquest. Most historians picture Trajan as the greatest war-zealous soldier among the early Caesars. Stylistically, his work has a welcome facility after the somewhat heavy pace of the majority of translations of the important European historical novelists. Most important, however, the modern reader, particularly the Jew, will find Steinberg's work an artistic panacea for a world abounding in scepticism and pessimism.

"Citizen"
By Meyer Levin

MAYER Levin will be remembered for his well-done novel on the *chalutzim* in Palestine, "Yehuda," and his distinguished portrait of second generation American Jews in Chicago, "The Old Bunch." To these, he adds the best work of his career to date, a study of the Chicago Memorial Day Massacre of 1937 during the "Little Steel" strike, and the subsequent repercussions of this event in the courts and LaFollette's Senate Committee investigation. "Citizen," (Viking Press, New York, \$2.75, 650 pages) is more than just another strike novel. The strike scene becomes a springboard for the author's searching analysis of the ills of the American social organism.

Using in general John Dos Passos' collective novel technique, Levin gives us a panorama of the vital aspects of American life today. The unifying force in the entire novel is the character of Mitchell Willner, a young Jewish physician. This individual, trained as a scientist in the search for objective truth, watches out of sheer curiosity the holiday parade of steel pickets before the Consolidated Steel

plant and is a shocked observer of the shooting down of these men by the police. In the ensuing melee he renders emergency aid. He becomes the official union physician. The shooting of the pickets proves the most important crisis in the development of Willner as a completely politically-sophisticated. His sense of justice is completely outraged by the unfair, vicious treatment accorded the strikers by the corrupt political administration, the steel corporation managers, and certain Fascist influences. This latter feeling is deepened when he is subjected to Jew-baiting by the corrupt legal representatives of the latter group.

He begins to definitely side with the strikers and becomes their supporter in the LaFollette Committee, known here as the Gottschalk Committee. He emerges from this entire experience as a completely politically-sophisticated individual, realizing that the labor problem must always be solved in keeping with the traditions of American democracy.

Besides this main thread, Levin has introduced a number of compact inter-chapters, giving us a synoptic view of the lives of the ten individuals who were killed by police bullets. Sketches such as that of the Lindstroms, of Damon the Greek, of Bill Donavon, deserve comparison with the brief biographies studying the work of John Dos Passos. The most important job of a novelist is to endow facts with blood and flesh and to give them the dimensions of life itself. Meyer Levin has done this extremely well.

The sociological novel in this country has in the last year forged to the forefront of American letters. John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath," Richard Wright's "Native Son," and books of this type are being applauded everywhere. Meyer Levin's "Citizen," belongs to this category. His style is lucid and simple. He has a tendency to be somewhat diffuse; compactness would be most desirable at times in his work. This is a minor fault, however, and there are definite indications that Levin is a novelist of considerable importance.

"Europe to Let" By Storm Jameson

THE first World War produced a generation of writers like Ernest Hemingway, who wrote with profound disillusionment about mankind. Something of their despair and bitterness

has crept into the work of the novelists concerned with the drift of Nazism in Europe. Storm Jameson's intensely angry novel "Europe to Let," (Macmillan Co., New York, \$2.75, 272 pages) is of this latter type. Simply and briefly, she reveals the European tragedy of the last twenty years. With polished, staccato strokes of the pen she shows the men and women of post-Versailles Europe drifting helplessly with no spiritual anchorage. Her Europe is a seething cauldron of war, prejudice and racial hatred which threatens to boil over into some major catastrophe threatening the very foundations of civilization itself.

Storm Jameson takes us first to Cologne in 1923, when the French were occupying the Ruhr. She gives us a foreshadowing of Hitlerism, a study of the origins of Nationalist Socialism. Here we find a group of young Germans, shabby, embittered ex-soldiers, vehemently anti-French, and nationalist to the point of fanaticism. Types like the neurotic Wiedermann and the embryonic Nazi, Kapp Schiller, reveal aims which were to set the stage for the tragic dramas of the ensuing years. Hesse, the one intelligent, international-minded young man of this group, finds his world and friends so narrow that he kills himself.

From Cologne in 1923, the novelist shifts us to Vienna in 1937, Prague in 1938, and finally in Budapest, Hungary. Vienna, classical land of gaiety and hope, is feeling the heavy shocks of the Nazi current. To Jewish people like Maria and her brother, Emil, this spells doom. Maria becomes a fugitive; Emil, brilliant surgeon has his hands crushed by the Nazis. He commits suicide. Nor are the people of Czechoslovakia any happier than the Viennese. Heroic and noble as they are, loving their democratic land as they do, the General Staeliks and the Hanas' can do nothing to stave off the betrayal of Czechoslovakia by England and France. In the end, these people become broken men and women.

Budapest shows a reactionary aristocracy blaming all its ills, Nazi-wise, on the Jews. Anti-Semitism is beginning to take on a terse, brutal, sinister aspect. Already Tihaneth, the Jewish journalist, floundering in spiritual desolation, fears the loss of his job because of racial prejudice, and despairs of any solution. What of tomorrow?

Here is a book which may seem sharp and biting. But it is harsh because its author believes that mankind can shape a better world than one compounded of war and racial prejudice. Her work says with conviction—"Chauvinism, War, Anti-Semitism, if civilization is to survive, must be eliminated." Moreover, what she has to say is said with refreshingly few literary affectations.

"No Place Like Home"

By Patience, Richard, Johnny Abbe

OUT of mouths of babes and sucklings," runs the familiar Biblical proverb. Veritably, this current travel book, (Julian Messner, New York, 257 pages) of the Abbe children confirms the aphorism. For Patience, 15; Richard, 13, and Johnny, 12, have succeeded in writing a sagacious commentary on the European scene.

Throughout their entire trip Europe was judged largely by these youngsters by a few simple standards—its unjust treatment of the Jew, its seething national hatreds, and its drive toward war. From the very outset they eulogize America, particularly their home Colorado, the safest place in the world to be. "People in this country don't seem to think or even care—who is a Jew and who isn't a Jew." How different was the attitude in Nazi Germany when they reached there. Ominously, large queues of Jews waited at foreign consulates anxiously intent on leaving the country. People were hostile to the Abbes, informing them that America was controlled by a Jewish President. Not all Germans were antagonistic to the Jews, the Abbes notice. Here a German "Aryan" boy took pride in conducting a Jewish lady across the street. There a German conductor treated a Jew with courtesy when the latter got off at the wrong stop and had to reboard the car. Whenever they could, the Abbes too, were helpful, as when they gave money to a Jew released from the Dachau concentration camp to enable him to get to England. His description of the horrors of Dachau revolted the Abbe children.

If their two previous books have been distinguished by their humor, then this work is to be recommended for its seriousness.

THE NEWS OF THE MONTH

By LESTER LYONS

THE Polish government in Paris is preparing a book relating to the brutal persecution of the Jews by the Nazis. The book will be based on the sworn statements of recent Polish refugees. One section will be devoted to a narration of religious persecution and to the burning of synagogues. Another will deal with mass executions in over fifty Polish towns. A third will describe the manner in which Jewish women are being forced into Nazi brothels.

The Joint Distribution Committee will distribute this Passover 1,500,000 pounds of matzoth among the Jews of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia and the German-controlled parts of Poland. The shipment of the matzoth will be carried out as part of the distribution of relief supplies, exempt from duty and transported without cost. Purchases of the unleavened bread are being made in Hungary, Roumania and Yugoslavia.

So acute is the epidemic in Nazi-Poland that Jewish and Polish doctors and nurses who fled to Lithuania from Poland have been told by the Red Cross that they may return to Poland. They have been assured that the German government would not molest them if they set up in the practice of their professions again in Poland.

The Nazi administrator of the Ponson district has ordered every sign of local Jewish life to be obliterated. No Jewish synagogues, schools, or cemeteries may remain in existence. The wholesale plundering of the property of Warsaw Jews has been nicknamed "the furniture war." The streets in the residential districts of Warsaw are continually loaded with the property of Jews to be carted away by German soldiers.

Legacies in favor of the Jewish communities of Germany, Austria and Sudetenland have been decreed by the government null and void. All such bequests have been confiscated by the government. The decree deprives the Jews of more than a million marks' worth of property.

The government of Slovakia has

entrusted to the Jew-baiting Hlinka Guards control of the Jews in that country. The Guards have decided that the Jews may patronize only special cafes and restaurants under strict supervision and that all payments to Jews for forced labor should be given to poor Slovak families.

The Department of State of this country has declared that persons residing in the German areas of Poland who seek visas for entry into the United States may apply to American consular officers in other countries. The Embassy at Berlin is the nearest immigration visa-issuing office for such persons. In Roumania, the only office for that purpose is the Legation at Bucharest. The American Embassy at Moscow is not authorized to issue visas.

A scroll of the law, valued at \$16,000, was stolen last month from the synagogue in the old Jewish Quarter at Damascus. The scroll, known as the Keter Torah (Crown of the Law) was written about the year 1183. Its 230 pages of gazelle's parchment are illuminated in gold.

Universalist Sunday School children throughout the country have been requested by the General Sunday School Association of the Universalist Church to make monetary contributions for the aid of Jewish refugee children. As part of its Third Annual Friendship Program the Association has urged consideration not only of the humanitarian aspect of relief but also of the deeper and more lasting "need of understanding and appreciation of people of other racial or religious backgrounds." It has suggested that the church children visit a neighborhood synagogue, have a rabbi speak at their Sunday School, have a Jewish mother explain the preparations for the Passover or Sabbath, or engage in some other activity that will help develop a better understanding of Jews.

In an endeavor to solve the basic problem of unemployment "in a determined spirit of cooperation and na-

tional unity," representatives of the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant faiths will hold a national Interfaith Conference on Unemployment in Washington in June. The Conference is sponsored by the Industrial Division of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Social Action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

TEL AVIV BEGGARS ORGANIZE

A trade union of beggars has been formed in Tel-Aviv. At a general meeting of all beggars in the city it was decided to divide the city into territories, each territory to be exploited by a certain group. This decision was made in order to curb the few enterprising beggars who had captured the most lucrative streets. A special court of honor will call to account any beggar infringing the decision of the union. The union has asked the public to assist its aims, declaring that it seeks to become a model organization.

The establishing of an Institute for the Formulation of Peace Aims, to be sponsored in this country and to operate in conjunction with the World Jewish Congress, was announced by Dr. Stephen S. Wise before the Governing Council of the American Jewish Congress. Outstanding historians, legal authorities and statesmen, Jewish and non-Jewish, will be members of the Institute.

The Jewish community of Athol, Massachusetts, has placed refugee aid ahead of an edifice for worship. For the second year the community has postponed erection of a synagogue building in order to conserve its resources for refugee activities.

The French Government has offered a haven in a district near Algiers for 30,000 women and child refugees from Poland. Preference will be given to the relatives of men serving in the Polish army in France.

An English court has held that a statement that certain non-Jewish directors were "nothing but a bunch of Jews" was capable of bearing a defamatory meaning. Damages were imposed against the persons uttering such statement.

The Jewish Scientific Institute of London (Yivo) is taking the case-histories of Jewish refugees who have arrived in England since 1933. The Yivo is seeking data with respect to the personal experiences of the refugees, the destruction they witnessed, the losses they sustained, and all other pertinent material still fresh in their memories. The data is intended not only to furnish historical material but also to enable the Jews to make a complete and systematic preparation of their peace demands.

A strong plea that all Jews should support the United Jewish Appeal for Refugees and Overseas Needs has been made by Bishop Sheil of Chicago. This noted Catholic Bishop declared that the Appeal "represents a far-reaching, systematic plan of rehabilitation, relief and resettlement which will mean new life and new homes for many thousands of the distressed areas of Europe."

Deploring the growth of an anti-Semitic spirit in this country, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, noted feminist leader, told the Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress: "If a Jew is denied a job then the whole Jewish people should rise and yell about it. If the Jews notice race prejudice in the schools, it is not for you to yell; it is up to the Gentiles to rise up and yell."

During the past six months the Jewish Agency for Palestine spent £600,000 in an effort to consolidate the economic position of the Jews in Palestine. The expenditures were for colonization, including the establishment of seven new settlements; youth immigration and the assistance of immigrants; unemployment benefits, and the extension of credit to industry.

Representatives of 210 Zionist and non-Zionist youth organizations having a membership of over 50,000 adopted a Zionist "Credo" at a recent conference sponsored by the Youth Department of the Jewish National Fund. The conference condemned

the British edict restricting Palestine land sales to Jews and resolved to undertake an extensive program supporting the plans of the Jewish National Fund for the purchase of new land.

Confidence that Palestine will eventually be the secure homeland of the Jewish people was expressed by General Jan Christian Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa. In urging that support be given to the current Keren Hayesod campaign in South Africa, General Smuts declared that "Nothing that has happened either now or

PREPAREDNESS IN DENMARK

When the German army invaded Denmark the Gestapo agents had complete lists of the Danish Jews and their property. One of the first acts of the Nazis was the arresting of prominent Jews.

during previous apparent setbacks that have confronted Zionism has made me falter for one moment in my belief that it will ultimately triumph."

The cornerstone of the third Beth Chalutzoth (Home for Refugee and Pioneer Girls) in Palestine has been laid. The Home, which is sponsored by the Women's League for Palestine, an American organization, will be similar to those already operated in Haifa and Tel Aviv, where 15,000 refugees and pioneer girls have been given shelter and vocational and educational guidance. The Home will cost \$100,000 of which \$25,000 has already been sent by the League. In applauding the beginning of the construction of the Home, the Rev. Dr. John Haynes Holmes said: "This is the perfect answer to Britain's treason. Nothing can defeat the work of the Jews in Palestine, because the Jews themselves are undefeatable."

Following a six-months' intensive study of conditions in Palestine, two Avukah Palestine fellows have reported that the most striking development since the outbreak of war in that land has been the complete change in the nature of the Arab-Jewish relations. Exhausted by the years of terror and bankrupt from economic disorganization and the extortions of terrorist bands, the Arabs have displayed an eagerness to establish friendly relations with the Jews. Another

noteworthy development has been the growth of united action among the Jews. This progress, however, has been impeded recently by a small group of Revisionists who have been seeking to curry government favor.

The American Jewish Committee has opened at its offices in this city a library of Jewish information. The library will be open to all persons who are interested in getting correct information about the Jews.

The Jews of Argentina have undertaken to raise \$1,250,000 this year for relief work in Europe and the upbuilding of Palestine. About 300,000 Jews, most of them in a comfortable middle-class position, live in that country. From 80 to 85 per cent of them have come from Eastern Europe. Zionism is strong there and reform Judaism plays no role. Nearly the entire Jewish population is represented by a central organization called the "Daja." Since the beginning of the war anti-Semitism has practically disappeared, the government having stopped Nazi anti-Jewish activities.

The Nazi Protectorate of the former Czech provinces of Bohemia and Moravia has demanded that the Jewish community of Prague make a special contribution of half a million kronen before May 1st. This levy is required in payment for alleged damage done to German economic interests in Czechoslovakia during the 20 years of its existence. That country is said by the Nazi to have been under "Jewish domination" during that period.

Since the outbreak of the war only five Jewish children are reported to have been born in all Germany. The Jewish death rate, however, has risen considerably. During the past six months 1,844 Jews are said to have suffered natural deaths in Berlin alone.

Senator King of Utah has called on Great Britain to facilitate the rebuilding of the Jewish national home in Palestine if it wants to "restore justice in Europe." At an emergency conference of the United Palestine Appeal he said that it was "our duty" to impress upon England the importance of "extending rather than curtailing" the development of such a home.

B.J.C. TEAM EARNS GREATER HONORS

By BEN GOLDBERG

THE season of 1939-40 will go down in the history of the Brooklyn Jewish Center basketball team as the most successful campaign it has enjoyed. Although past years have seen Center cage representatives enjoy more than uncommon success, last season saw the team reach new heights.

Brooklyn Jewish Center's record of 36 victories in 43 games stamps it as the outstanding club team in New York and vicinity. No other institution approached this brilliant record, made all the more remarkable when it is considered that the team was compelled to play two or three times a week against the strongest competition and under adverse conditions.

As B.J.C. proudly points to a number of well-deserved accomplishments recorded the past season, two of them stand out particularly.

First and foremost, the quintet carried off premier honors in the first annual Eastern Jewish Center League sponsored by the Jewish Welfare Board; second, the team earned runner-up honors in the Metropolitan A.A.U. championship tournament.

Competing in Section II of the Jewish Welfare play the team notched up a record of 12 victories and one setback to earn the divisional honors after defeating Newark Y. M. H. A. in the playoff. Newark, incidentally, was the team which handed the Center its lone setback.

Then in the championship game,

the Center hoopsters performed brilliantly to stave off Eighth Avenue Temple's attack and come out on top. By virtue of this triumph, the Center will be rewarded with a handsome trophy, emblematic of the titular laurels, and the members of the team are to receive handsome wrist watches.

In the Metropolitan A.A.U. play, the team surpassed last year's stellar accomplishment of garnering the Kings-Queens County Championship by marching through stiff opposition to forge into the final round. Opposed to Ohrbach A. A. for the championship Brooklyn Jewish Center lost a tough game, mainly because three of the star players were unable to perform capably due to leg injuries. The A.A.U. has presented silver medals to the players for this achievement.

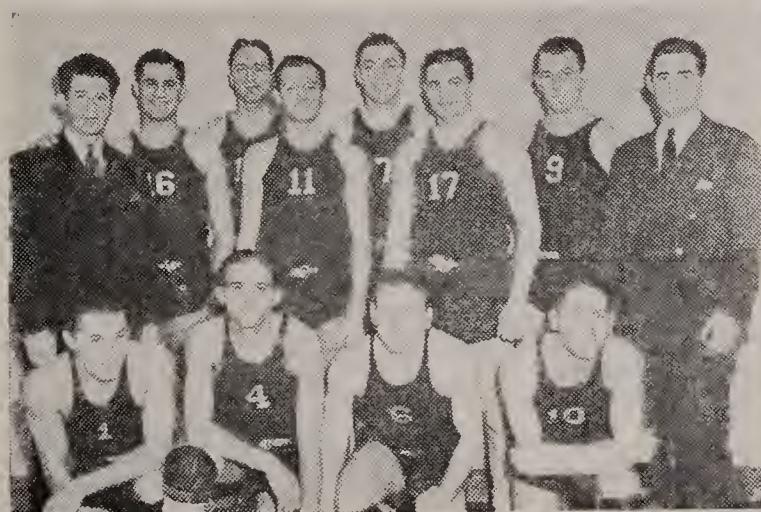
The other feats also enhanced the team's accomplishments. In five games with Union Temple its neighborhood rival, B. J. C. won all five, one by a margin of 23 points and a second by 10 points. The final victory was notched up in the quarter-final round of the A.A.U. tournament.

The other feat was in beating Ohrbach A. A. the subsequent A. A. U. champion, three times in five games. It was indeed ironical that one of the Ohrbach victories should have come in the final round of the A.A.U. tournament.

It is worth noting that although losing seven games, Coach Sammy Schoenfeld's charges defeated every team which won over them. Furthermore, four of the seven losses were sustained in overtime periods.

Although all of the Center players performed in fine style throughout a long and arduous season, made tougher by additional games in the A. A. U. competition, two players in particular were outstanding. They were Irwin Witty and Isidore Katz. The remaining players who showed up well under the strain of grueling competition were Jack Kleiner, Dave Gotkin, Max Tischler, Sam Smith, Leo Merson, Harry Kovner, George Roberts, Sid Peck and Bill Taback.

Our junior team is not to be denied its right. Playing beautiful basketball all season long, our juniors came away with a record of 16 wins as against 7 losses. At each one of our home games the boys led by Capt. Norman Ruchman, played the brand of ball that drew praise and spectators. Often as a result of these preliminary games, our fans filled the gym long in advance of the time for start of the varsity attraction. Coach Irv. Horowitz did a good job with his squad of Ruchman, Lipp, Rose, Goldman, Liebler, Finkel, Radutsky and Husid. Keep up the good work boys — the varsity may need help before long.



Kneeling, Left to Right—Max Tischler, Dave Gotkin, Isidor Katz, Samuel Smith. Standing—Left to Right—Sam Schoenfeld, coach; Jack Kleiner, Irving Witty, Harry Kovner, Sid Peck, Geo. Roberts, Bill Taback and Leo Merson.



Kneeling, Left to Right—Melvin Lippe, Ed. Rose, Ted Goldman, Jay Liebler. Standing, Left to Right—Capt. Norman Ruchman, Abe Finkel, Coach Irv. Horowitz, Milt Radutsky, and George Husid.

BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

ADULT INSTITUTE CLOSES SUCCESSFUL SEASON

The seventh season of our Institute of Jewish Studies for Adults came to an official close last Thursday evening. More than one hundred men and women attended the various classes conducted by our Institute this year. The innovation started this season of having two special classes for women conducted in the morning proved most successful and they will be resumed in the coming Fall. Rabbi Levinthal, the director of the Institute, is already planning various improvements in all of the departments for the coming season and it is hoped that a yet larger enrollment will mark the coming year's sessions.

DIALECTIC DISCOURSE BY MR. DONER

Mr. Jacob S. Doner, a member of our Governing Board and our Religious Service Committee, will deliver an interesting talk in the prayer room on Saturday afternoon, April 20th (Shabbos Hagadol) at 4 o'clock. The discourse will deal with the various rituals in connection with preparations for Passover.

SISTERHOOD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING THIS THURSDAY

Due to the Passover Holiday the Sisterhood Board meeting will be held this Thursday afternoon, April 25th, at 1:30 p.m. instead of the usual fourth Monday in the month. All members of the Board of Directors are requested to please attend.

CHILDREN'S CONGREGATION TO CONDUCT SERVICES IN MAIN SYNAGOGUE THIS SABBATH MORNING

The entire services this Sabbath morning in the Main Synagogue will be conducted by the Children's Congregation. The following children will officiate: Benjamin Zirn, Bertram Brown and Robert Goldberg will say the *Shachris*. Donald Gribetz, Martin Lukashok, and Sidney Wiener will read the portion of the Torah. Joseph Newman will recite the *maftir*. Arthur Feinberg will deliver the sermon, and Leroy Lowenfeld will officiate at the *musaf* services.

MOTION PICTURES OF PALESTINE

Members of the Center and their friends are invited to witness the showing of motion pictures of Palestine, on Tuesday evening, April 25th at 8:30 o'clock.

Two latest Palestinian talking pictures will be shown, namely: "Sanctuary" and "Dagania," a technicolor film, with narrations by Maurice Samuel.

The evening is arranged by the Eastern Parkway Zionist District.

PASSOVER GYM AND BATHS SCHEDULE

The Gym and Baths Department will be open for women on Monday, April 22nd from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and for men from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. It will be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 23rd and 24th, and will reopen on Thursday as per usual schedule.

This department will also be closed for the concluding days of Passover, Monday and Tuesday, April 29th and 30th and will reopen on Wednesday morning at 10 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES

The Sunday School and Hebrew School witnessed the technicolor film "Tel Aviv" on April 7th.

Each student received special Passover material containing the four questions and information about the holiday. The younger classes worked on Passover cut-outs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GIFTS

The Center gratefully acknowledges receipt of gifts from the following:

Taleisim

Louis Halperin, in honor of his son's wedding.

Louis Parnes, in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of his grandson.

Hamoshim

Mrs. and Mrs. Joseph I. Aaron.
Library Books

Abe Halperin

HEBREW SCHOOL CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The Hebrew School will close its sessions on Sunday, April 21st. There will be a vacation for the Passover holiday and classes will resume on Wednesday, May 1st.

PASSOVER SERVICES

The Passover services will be held in our Center synagogue on Monday and Tuesday evenings, April 22nd and 23rd at 6:30 and Tuesday and Wednesday, April 23rd and 24th, at 8:30 o'clock. Rabbi Levinthal will preach on both days on the significance of the festival and Rev. Kantor will officiate at the services.

Services for the first born son will be held on Monday, April 22nd at 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

SABBATH SERVICES

Kindling of candles at 6:23 o'clock. Friday evening services at 6:18.

Sabbath services, (Shabbat Haggadah) Parsha "Ahare," will commence at 8:45 A.M.

Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the portion of the Torah.

Mincha services at 6:00 P.M.

DAILY SERVICES

Morning services at 7 and 8.

Mincha services at 6:00 P.M.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

The following books have recently been added to our library collection and are available for circulation:

Scott, Sir Walter—"Set of Waverly Novels."

Ginzberg, Louis—"Legends of the Jews VI and VII."

Mielziner, M.—"Introduction to the Talmud."

Bialik, H. N.—"Knight of Onions and Knight of Garlic."

Madariaga, Salvador de—"Christopher Columbus."

Abrahams, Israel—"Ethical Wills"—2 parts.

Steinberg, Milton—"As a Driven Leaf."

Margolis, Max—"Hebrew Scriptures in the Making."

CONGRATULATIONS

Our heartiest congratulations and best wishes are extended to the following:

Mr. and Mrs. Sol. Sussman of 985 Park Place on the marriage of their son Irving Sussman to Miss Yvette Levy on April 14th.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Berger, Melvin
Student Unmarried
Res. 629 81st St.

Proposed by Morris D. Wender
Breier, Aaron

Sportswear Unmarried
Res. 135 Ocean Ave.
Bus. 1107 Broadway
Proposed by Morris Hirsch
and David Rubenstein

Application for re-instatement in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Gasner, Mrs. Mary
Res. 925 Prospect Place
Proposed by Mrs. H. Salit

RABBI LEVINTHAL'S PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

Rabbi Levinthal was one of the speakers at the Institute on Marriage and the Family meeting held at the Temple Anshe Chessed on Tuesday evening, March 26th. He spoke on "The Jewish Concept of Marriage."

On Monday, April 8th, he was the principal speaker at the special luncheon of the Women's League for Palestine held at the Astor, which marked the laying of the cornerstone of the new *Beth Hachalutzoth* of Palestine.

The Rabbi delivered the closing address at the Borough-wide conference of the newly organized Brooklyn Jewish Community Council which was held on Sunday, April 14th, at the Center.

On Tuesday evening, April 18th, he was one of the speakers at the dinner which opened the Brooklyn campaign of the United Jewish Appeal at the Towers Hotel.

SISTERHOOD CHORAL GROUP TO MEET ON MAY 1st

Due to the intervening Passover holidays, the next meeting of the Sisterhood Choral group will be held on Wednesday, May 1st, at 12:45 p.m. instead of the usual Tuesday.

CENTER BULLETIN NOT TO BE PUBLISHED NEXT WEEK

Because of the Passover holidays the *Center Bulletin* will not be published on Friday, April 26th. The next issue will appear on Friday, May 3rd.

UNITED JEWISH APPEAL DINNER MAY 9th

The committee in charge of the Brooklyn Jewish Center campaign for the United Jewish Appeal will hold its annual dinner at the Center on Thursday evening, May 9th. Isidor Fine is chairman of the Center Committee; Judge Emanuel Greenberg is chairman of the entire Eastern Parkway District and co-chairman for Brooklyn. The United Jewish campaign includes the Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal, the National Refugee Service, and The Ort. Subscriptions for the dinner may be made at the Center office at \$2.50 per person.

CLUB NOTES

The clubs are planning various activities for a Club Bazaar to be held in May. Plans for appropriate booths and games are being submitted by the Shomrim and Center Girls. The Maccabees are planning a Palestine booth and the Vivalets are arranging an Arts and Crafts booth.

The Candle-Lite Girls held a successful Purim Masquerade marked by a variety of interesting costumes.

The Photography Club expects to announce soon the winners of its photography contest for the best prints submitted by members of the group.

On April 6th, in the Jewish Center gymnasium, the Eagles Athletic Club defeated the Jewish Center Shomrim basketball team to the tune of 11-10. Leading the Jewish Center team was Roger Doroshaw, Daniel Pressner, Larry Goldstein, Sheldon Liebler, and Everett Alpert. The Shomrim went down to defeat fighting valiantly.

SCHEDULE OF JUNIOR CLUB MEETINGS

The following junior clubs meet Saturday evenings at 7:30 o'clock.

Senior Girls.
Center Girls.
Shomrim (boys).
Maccabees.
Vivalets (girls).

On Sunday afternoons at 2:30 o'clock the following clubs convene:

Photography—Open to all club members.

Candle Lites (girls).

The Inta-League—(boys and girls) meets Wednesdays at 7:30.

CONCLUDING SERVICES FOR PASSEOVER

Services for the concluding days of the holiday will be held on Sunday evening and Monday evening, April 28th and 29th at 6:00 o'clock and on Monday and Tuesday mornings at 8:30 o'clock. Rabbi Levinthal will preach on both days.

On Tuesday morning, April 29th, the Yizkor or memorial services for the dead will be recited at 10:15 o'clock.

PASSEOVER VOCABULARY

(Continued from page 10)

is naturally curious to know the why and wherefore of this elaborate meal.

MOROR is the horse-radish symbolizing the bitter plight of the enslaved Israelites.

HAROSES is made of a mixture of apples, nuts and wine. Originally it was used as a medicinal protection against sharpness of the bitter herbs. Because of its color it is taken as a reminder of the bricks and mortar with which the Israelites had to do the work imposed on them by their taskmasters in Egypt.

THE SHANK BONE is emblematic of the pascal lamb. To this day, the Samaritans at Nablus still sacrifice a pascal lamb on Pesach amidst quaint ceremonies.

THE EGG represents the Passover festive offering.

AFIKOMEN is a Greek word meaning "dessert." In Temple days the meal would end with the meat of the pascal lamb. In our days we make the matzoh the official dessert of the Seder meal. To keep the children alert during the Seder, the Afikomen is hidden. The children possess themselves of it and redeem it by some gift.

OPENING OF THE DOOR. Some believe this refers to the expectation of the visit of Elijah in every Jewish home, to herald good tidings for Israel. Others explain it as an expression of the justified indignation of the Jew against those who spread the malicious lies that human blood is used in the Seder ceremonies.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Cemetery Committee — Nathan T. Schwartz, Chairman.

Hyman Aaron, William Ball, Isidor Fine, Moses Ginsberg, Pincus Glickman, Harry Gold, B. J. Kline, Samuel Rottenberg.

Civic Committee—J. L. Holtzman, Chairman; Ira L. Rosenson, Vice-Chairman.

Saul S. Abelov, Murray T. Feiden, Joseph Heller, Ben Hyde, Sidney S. Leonard, Mrs. Harry Levy.

Chevra Kadisha Committee — Louis Albert, Chairman; Henry Davis, Vice-Chairman.

Abraham Ginsburg, Michael Ginsburg, Samuel Meltzer, David Stark, B. Waxman.

Forum and Education Committee — Max Herzfeld, Chairman; Isaac Siegmeister, Vice-Chairman.

Samuel P. Abelov, Milton J. Goell, Harry Blickstein, Ira I. Gluckstein, S. H. Goldberg, Judge Emanuel Greenberg, ex-officio; Jacob L. Holtzman, Louis N. Jaffe, Arthur Joseph, Lester Lyons, Ira L. Rosenson, Mrs. N. D. Shapiro, Hon. Wm. I. Siegel, Isaac D. Sorgen, Mrs. A. A. Weinstein.

Grievance Committee — Albert A. Weinstein, Chairman.

Morris Drugasch, Abraham Ginsburg, Harry A. Harrison, Joseph Heller, Max Herzfeld, Albert Joley, Frank Levey, Leib Lurie, Mrs. A. Prince, Barney Olch, Louis Rothstein, Wm. Shorestein, Louis Simon, Samuel Stark, Samuel Strausberg, Hon. Nathan Sweedler, Louis Weinstock.

Hebrew Education Committee—Frank Schaeffer, Chairman; Morris D. Wender, Vice-Chairman.

Harry Blickstein, Dr. Michael Canick, Max Goldberg, Samuel Greenblatt, Moses H. Hoenig, Louis N. Jaffe, K. Karl Klein, Solomon Levinson, Mrs. I. Lowenfeld, Mrs. Benjamin L. Levitt, Louis Schacter, Henry Teller, Mrs. I. Wiener, Bernard Weissberg.

House Committee — Hyman Aaron, Chairman; Louis Halperin, Vice-Chairman.

Nathan A. Arvins, Meyer Chizner, Jack Chesner, Isidor Fine, Jacob A. Fortunoff, Moses Ginsberg, Pincus Glickman, Henry Gold, S. H. Goldberg, Samuel Greenblatt, Harry

Greene, Louis Kaplan, Arnold W. Lederer, Israel A. Levine, Barney Olch, Isidor Polivnick, Heyman Schrier, Harry Strongin, Morris D. Wender, Tobias Zwerdling.

Library Committee — Rabbi Louis Hammer, Chairman; Harry A. Harrison, Vice-Chairman.

Samuel P. Abelov, Irving L. Cohen, S. A. Doctorow, Jacob S. Doner, Dr. Joseph Feldman, Abraham Feit, Dr. Reuben Finkelstein, Louis J. Gribetz, Michael Ginsburg, Dr. Jacob Halperin, K. Karl Klein, Morris Levine, Margaret M. Levy, Samuel Pasner, David Mickelbank, Samuel Stark, Hon. Nathan Sweedler, Bernard Weissberg, Leo Weitz.

Membership Committee—Judge Emanuel Greenberg, Chairman; S. H. Goldberg, Vice-Chairman.

Alex Bernstein, S. A. Doctorow, Murray T. Feiden, Milton J. Goell, Martin M. Goldman, Samuel Greenblatt, Ben Hyde, Dr. Wm. Hyde, Albert Joley, Albert B. Kirschenbaum, Hyman Jasper, Frank Levey, Dr. Abraham Levine, Israel Levine, Lester Lyons, Mrs. Harry Levy, David Mickelbank, Louis Parnes, Samuel Pasner, Chas. Perman, Geo. B. Rabinor, Louis Rothstein, Herman B. Schell, Joseph Schonbrun, Dr. A. H. Shack, Wm. S. Shorestein, Hyman Siegal, Isaac D. Sorgen, Dr. Moses Spatt, Benj. Wisner, Albert Witty, Mort Zimmerman, Abraham H. Zirn, Tobias Zwerdling.

Physical Training Committee—David B. Kaminsky, Chairman; Albert Witty, Vice-Chairman.

Milton D. Balsam, Mrs. Charles H. Bellin, Alex Bernstein, Mrs. M. Bernhardt, Jack Chesner, Harry Greene, Bernard Fink, Dr. Reuben Finkelstein, Barnett L. Greenstein, Dr. Samuel Koplik, Abraham Katlowitz, Mrs. M. Leff, Dr. Abraham Levine, Al Loonin, I. Lowenfeld, Dr. Irving L. Moskowitz, David Nemerov, Aaron Pollack, George B. Rabinor, Wm. Rosenberg, Louis Rothstein, Dr. A. H. Shack, Isaac D. Sorgen, Mrs. Albert Witty, Dr. Harry T. Zankel, Abraham H. Zirn, Nathan Wolfe, Benj. H. Wisner, Mort Zimmerman, Irving Klein, Samuel I. Samuels.

Publicity Committee—Louis J. Gribetz.

Chairman: Wm. I. Siegel, Vice-Chairman.

Samuel P. Abelov, Robert J. Bank, Milton J. Goell, Harry A. Harrison, Max Herzfeld, David B. Kaminsky, Frank Levey, Isaac Siegmeister, Isaac D. Sorgen, Mrs. A. A. Weinstein.

Religious Service Committee—Abraham Ginsburg, Chairman; Leib Lurie, Vice-Chairman.

Louis Alpert, Mrs. J. D. Booth, Jacob S. Doner, Charles Fine, Michael Ginsburg, Morris Groden, David Halpern, Joseph Horowitz, Joseph Levine, Isaac Levingson, Abe Mann, Benjamin Martz, Morris Miller, Mrs. K. I. Ostow, Hyman Rachmil, Samuel Stark, Henry Teller, Jack Sterman, Morris D. Wender.

Social Committee — Saul S. Abelov, Chairman.

Maurice Bernhardt, Irving L. Cohen, Hyman Fried, Albert Joley, Ira I. Gluckstein, William Hyde, Morton Klinghoffer, Robert J. Lance, Sidney S. Leonard, Benj. Martz, Samuel Nicoll, Mrs. K. I. Ostow, Geo. B. Rabinor, Chas. Rubenstein, Dr. Henry C. Sandler, Herman B. Schell, Joseph Schonbrun, Bernard R. Schulman, Jack Sterman, Jacob Wirtzbaum, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Witty, Dr. Harry T. Zankel, Harry Zucker, Tobias Zwerdling.

MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL MEETING

Saturday Evening, April 27th
8:30 P. M.

(CHOL HAMOED PESACH)

The following artists will appear:

"The GREAT MAURICE"
Magician

PAUL DENNIS

(Son of the late Cantor Josef Rosenblatt) in a program of Jewish and English songs

BENJAMIN FISHBEIN

Radio and Motion Picture Entertainer;
Talented Comedian, formerly with
Maurice Schwartz's Art Theatre

SAM ROSS

of the Silvertown Chord Orchestra,
at the Piano

All members of the Center are cordially invited to attend.

URIEL DA COSTA

(Continued from page 6)

himself to the long and involved ritual—no easy matter for a man already in the thirties. But he was a docile pupil and found no difficulty in mastering it.

Sometimes, however, he was vexed. For he soon discovered that Judaism was a much more complicated and exacting religion than the religion he had abandoned. What was mass and the paternosters, the feasts and fasts of the Catholic Church as compared with the bewildering religious details required of a Jew? Never, for instance, could he eat or drink, or perform any of the normal functions of a human being without finding himself confronted with an outraged religious injunction menacingly staring in his face. His coming and going, his sitting and standing, the very closest intimacies of life, he found ruled and governed by laws and regulations not the slightest trace of which he could find in the Bible. A disturbing doubt began to steal itself into his mind. He craved for information, but in the narrow circle in which he lived there was no one to give it to him, for the erstwhile Marranos observed the rituals of their religion without question.

It did not take very long before his secret doubt developed into open rebellion. It was for freedom that he had risked his life and braved the dangers of the Inquisition—was he now to be shackled by the tyranny of the synagogue? He no longer frequented divine services, was careless in the observance of the dietary laws, and was guilty of many other similar religious lapses.

When the report of Uriel's religious misconduct was noised about, the Jews were stunned by it. It was the first flagrant break in the religious solidarity of the Marrano colony, and they felt the hurt deeply. Uriel was regarded as a heretic, a blasphemer, a defiler of the Holy Law. Pious men avoided him, children insulted him on the street, even the beggars refused his alms, as though the money was tainted and not to be touched.

In his loneliness, separated from his people, Uriel da Costa occupied his time by examining some of the beliefs current among the Jews in the light of their biblical authority. His mind fell on the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and reward and punishment after death. He was so struck by the

glaring contrast between the universality of these beliefs and their almost complete absence in the Bible, that he not only communicated his findings to the few friends he still met, but resolved to publish a book on the subject.

Da Costa was playing with fire. The Jews might have been willing to overlook his heresy, but how could they forgive an attack that was levelled against the Church no less than against the synagogue? The freest state in Europe was not yet free enough to countenance an assault upon one of the most cherished teachings of Christianity, made by one of the very people they had admitted into their midst and treated so generously. It was time for the Jews to bestir themselves if they were not willing to compromise their standing and position in the community.

And they lost no time in doing it. They not only called on Samuel da Silva, an Amsterdam physician and scholar, to refute da Costa's pernicious teachings, but denounced him to the local authorities. Uriel da Costa was arrested, kept several days in prison, and his work was condemned to the flames.

Uriel felt the hurt intensely. Of a quick-tempered nature, an enthusiast whose impetuosity overpowered his better judgment, he now rushed headlong from one indiscretion to another. A long series of squabbles and irritations, of petty quarrels and persecutions followed on both sides, during which time Uriel da Costa found himself living alone in a hostile community, separated from his race, even his family, with the finger of destiny pointing to no other fate but tragedy.

Everything had been cut off from him; like a prisoner condemned to solitary confinement he saw nothing of the world but four walls of his cell. The silence of his house almost crazed him. He could not endure his isolation, to be shunned by all as one smitten with a plague. He was not a strong-minded man, a thinker of the first order who could live happily in his world of ideas as in boundless space, unconcerned about the world about him, as Spinoza was to do not many years later. He could not do without the world; he longed for human contact and the company of his fellow-men.

At last, he could stand his solitude

no longer; he resolved to make his peace with the synagogue so that the ban might be removed and he could be counted among the living again. He yielded to the urgency of necessity rather than to the promptings of his heart. His family had renounced him, and his wife had been dead for some time. To put an end to his loneliness, he wanted to remarry, and this was impossible so long as he was in excommunication. He was willing to pay tribute to Judaism with his lips when his heart had long fallen away from it, or, to quote his own words, he resolved "to be an ape among apes." Nevertheless, da Costa was a man of feeling, sentiment and emotion, the product of a religious childhood and a Jesuit training. Religion was deeply rooted in his soul, although he could not find his spiritual climate in either Judaism or Christianity. He, therefore, evolved a religion of his own, a kind of deistic faith, based on natural law without creeds and ceremonies, without rituals and observances—an abstract religion without supernatural or theological implications.

It was not to be expected that Uriel da Costa would keep his secret. Silence had never come easy to him, especially when the subject was religion. When, therefore, he was approached by two Christians who had intended to embrace Judaism, and asked his opinion, he gave them such a gloomy picture of the Jewish religion, warning them against the heavy yoke they would be laying on their necks, that, frightened and discouraged, they gave up their intention. To add to his dismay, he was betrayed by one of his nephews, who reported his uncle's unreligious conduct.

Again was he excommunicated, this time with even greater severity than before, and again was he condemned to a life of loneliness. Had he lived on another planet with no one around him, he could not have been so utterly alone. At an age—he was forty-nine—when men feel the need of the warmth and congeniality of friendship, he was immured in this prison-house with no heart or face to cheer him. Inevitably, too, when the shadows of his past life invaded his thoughts, he must have found much for which to blame himself, notwithstanding the self-righteous pose of his autobiography.

Uriel da Costa was by this time a broken and disheartened man; his power of resistance was blunted and he had no strength to fight. What years were still left him, he longed to spend in peace. It was, therefore, from a sense of expediency rather than honor that, for the third time, he was prevailed upon to sign a document of recantation.

The terms of his penance that had been agreed upon were mild, with nothing in them to hurt his proud and sensitive nature. Instead, the penance turned out to be as spectacular a performance as was ever conceived by the gloomy genius of the Inquisition. None of the sadistic practices of the so-called Holy Office were left out. Da Costa's description of what happened in the little synagogue in Amsterdam is so gory that the proceedings could not but fill him with disgust and loathing, and there is no reason to doubt its authenticity.

Uriel da Costa was already a man of middle age and, because of his many trials and tribulations, an old man. Yet this had not deterred his tormentors from parading him before a jeering and mocking congregation, dressed in a penitent's robe and holding a lighted candle in his hand. He was made to stand up and recite in a loud voice a confession of sins which he had signed hardly knowing its contents.

Nor was this his worst ordeal; for, when the reading was ended, he was led to a corner of the synagogue, made to strip to the waist, and administered the thirty-nine biblical lashes. Quivering with pain and humiliation, and possibly with bleeding wounds, he was made to stretch himself across the threshold of the synagogue and suffer the people to step over his prostrate body as they walked out, some kicking him with spiteful, pious loathing, while others stepped over him jauntily.

It was a mortifying experience to tax the endurance of any man, especially one as sensitive as Uriel da Costa. Blinded by rage, faint, and with torn garments, he groped his way back to the stillness and seclusion of his home, vowing revenge for the humiliation he had suffered. "I want the power of revenge," he muttered to himself as he paced the corridor of his lonely house. And the revenge he planned and executed was too terrible even for so crazed and tormented a mind as his. It was his "An Example of a Human Life," portend-

ing to be his autobiography, but in reality, more of a challenge than a true history of his life, more of a furious blast against his tormentors than an impartial statement of his case, every word dripped in gall, every sentence reeking with hate and venom.

It was the end of a tangled life, a life of much sorrow and great suffering. Some of his agonies he might have been spared had he been more cautious, less impetuous, given more to reality than to dreams. Never had he been at home anywhere, never had he belonged neither in Portugal nor in Holland, neither in Judaism nor in Christianity. Like a driven leaf he was constantly tossed hither and thither, between belief and unbelief, between enthusiastic faith and fanatical skepticism. As a soul possessed, he hovered between two worlds—between the world of Christianity to which he did not belong, and the world of Judaism which he failed to make his own. He loved Judaism but criticized and opposed it; he loved the Jews, and, in the end, hated them. He had never experienced the joy and ecstasy of his homecoming. He always remained a stranger, an outsider, a man who did not belong, a Portuguese hidalgo who emigrated. Death alone could wipe out the put an end to his futile life.

But now it was all over. He had nothing more left to live for. He had bidden his farewell to a life that brought him nothing but pain and misery. Never again would he be humiliated, never again look into the jeering and mocking faces of his enemies. Death alone could wipe out the reproach of his cowardly conduct and put an end to his futile life.

Suicide may be cowardice, but sometimes it is cowardice that keeps one from it. He took out his pistol, cleaned it, loaded it well, and, with a steady hand, made an end to his strange and tangled life.

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"ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN
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Mon., May 20th—

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"INTERMARRIAGE — COMPLEX
AND CONFLICTS"

Prof. Bertha Gold
Dept. of Physiology and Hygiene
Hunter College

"THE ROLE OF THE FATHER
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Mon., May 27th—

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